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CLEMENT SULIVANE, Editor and Proprietor.

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How Did it End?

'Tis a packet of letters, time-faded and worn,
Which have lain in a dusty corner neglected;
Undated, for lovers laugh time to scorn,
But signs of their age are soon detected,
For their spelling is bad and their grammar is weak,
And quaint are the phrases in which they speak;
They were written before you or I was born,
And we see an old love through their words reflected.

There's a mellow savor about each line,
Like the odor of rose-leaves dried and time-rusted;
Like the rich boquet of some choice old wine,
Which ripens and glows all mould-encrusted.
The time of patches and powdered tresses,
Of broidered coats and brocaded dresses,
Speak to us out of these letters of mine,
And tell how of old they loved and trusted.

"Sweetheart," he calls her—the fine old word
Rings tender and true in its Saxon simplicity—
He tells the old tale: how his heart is stirred,
Yet wavers and faints at its own felicity;
How he feared to speak and was nearly undone,
How he spoke at last and the fear was gone;
And now he is tender and now absurd,
As lovers will be who write not for publicity.

And how did it end There is nothing to show.
The beginning only is here presented.
Did the love grow cold and the lovers go
On their separate ways? or was bliss prevented,
As it sometimes is, by a cruel father?
Or, one proving false, did this love end rather
In wailing and passionate weeping? Ah, no,
Let us hope that they married and never repented.

CHASED BY WOLVES.

It was a race for life. Following hard upon the fleet skater were a troop of wolves as fleet. Charles Vance heard their breathing, the short impatient sniffs, the regular patter of sharp feet upon the ice like a click. The scene lay in Canada. The moon sailed through drifting clouds, now partially obscured, then bursting forth in a flood of silvery light. At one side was the dense pine forest, broken by clumps of leafless oak or hickory, and winding in and out as it followed the course of the river; on the other, the wide, snow-covered plain. A mile yet before a house would be reached, and in that time—

Brave as he was, Mr. Vance shuddered. At twenty-eight there was so much of life before him. He had reached a point where fortune began to smile upon him; and for the past six months his leisure hours had been bright with glowing air-castles, which all had Rose Ardley for their day-dream. For her sake it was that he had undertaken this perilous journey.

Faster! faster! This turn showed him the fierce gleaming eyes that repeated themselves until there seemed to be hundreds. Rays of lurid light flashed out; lolling scarlet tongues, that thirsted for a draught of blood, and a dainty morsel of flesh. A mis-step, a half-hidden hillock of ice to trip the unwary traveler, a moment lost, and he would be in the power of these ravenous animals. No wonder his pulses quivered, or that he shrank from so horrible a fate.

More than once he had gone up and down the river for pleasure. More than once there had been a gay party; girls in their pretty skating costumes; but sweetest of all was Rose, her golden curls blown about by the wind, her cheeks brilliant, her purple eyes dilating with enjoyment. Bright and coquettish was she, fond of teasing him until his patience was almost exhausted; but a sweet, loving girl in the midst of it. At midsummer she was to be his wife. He had extorted that promise from her, though he would fain have taken her long before. And yet, only the other morning they had fallen into a trifling dispute about this very visit. She wanted him to go up for this Thursday evening; he did not see his way clear to do it conveniently.

"Thursday is pay-day," he had said, alluding to his works and workmen. "I never can get away on Thursday nights until dark. My horse has fallen lame, too, Rose I cannot ride him after to-day."

"You once thought skating up the river a mere pastime," replied Miss Ardley; and her tone was a trifle sharp and haughty.

"In the day-time, and with company. That makes a difference."

"Oh, very well: if you care so little to come, there's no more to be said." And she turned away with an air of superb indifference.

"Rose, it is not that. I can come up Friday, and stay until Monday."

"But Thursday night is Eleanor's birthnight. I thought of the pleasure *to her*, to have you among her guests. Don't put yourself out, however."

Charles Vance was not a man likely to be canonized for either meekness or patience; and she was purposely trying him. He felt vexed.

"I'll come if I can," concluded Mr. Vance shortly. His tone was cold, and his eyes wandered over the waste of snow.

"Very well," she gaily said. "I shall expect you, mind. Good-bye." And she kissed to him the tips of her dainty fingers.

He strode down the path, unhitched his horse with a jerk, and went riding over the road, never once glancing back. Perverse Rose Ardley was privately peeping after him, rather enjoying than not the semi-quarrel.

"I'll not go; she shall not get me there on Thursday evening," he answered to himself in his annoyance. But ere Thursday evening came his resolve was broken, after the manner of lovers, and he meant to go.

"I must skate up," he said, "The night's clear and frosty."

"Hope there'll be no wolves abroad, Master Vance," said the brawny Englishman, Hugh, one of his workmen and warm admirers. "Stainsly shot one over by the bridge, the other morning. You'd better take a pistol."

"I'll trust to luck and my good skates," answered Mr. Vance, laughingly, rather ridiculing the notion of "wolves."

He started. The night, as he had observed, was clear and frosty; very bright and cold. Half his journey had been accomplished, when he heard a shrill, sharp cry echoing from the woods. Then another, as if in answer, and one at a distance. For a moment his blood curdled in his veins. What were these cries? Ah what—what but the wolves?

Nearer came the cry; and nearer: as if the dreadful animals scented their victim. He glided over the ice like lightning, his strides quickened by the first click he heard from his pursuers. At first, as rapidly as possible, in a straight line; for not a second was to be lost. Every nerve and limb was strained to its utmost tension. A mile, perhaps; and if he had to double—A horrible flash of despair almost paralysed him. That was certain death. Why had he been so heedless as to disregard sage Hugh's warning? But he had never seen a wolf during his sojourn in these Canadian wilds.

Faster, faster! Turns that frightfully lengthened his journey, but gave him a moment's respite, for his pursuers were by this means thrown off their track, and were some time in recovering their speed. The moon shone out brightly. Every tree seemed outlined against the sky with painful distinctness; here a gnarled old oak, that had been riven with some fierce bolt; there a clump of gleaming evergreens, that mocked him in their security. And now the river widened. Hardly a week before, he and Rose Ardley had enjoyed a gay frolic of skating on this very spot. Was she still vexed with him? Oh, if she could but know!

In imagination their red tongues seemed to touch him. One of them seemed to hurt himself in some way, for there came a sharp howl of pain. The pursuit was stopped for an instant, and then they came on the faster. Charles Vance's limbs were weak, his pulses throbbing from exhaustion, his very brain reeled. The fiery eyes seemed to scorch him with their lurid glare, and now he could hear the rapid, expectant breath. So near safety, and yet——A dispairing cry broke from his lips. Rose, Rose! Farewell to her, to happiness, to all.

Rose Ardley, the centre of a gay group of cousins and friends, was this selfsame evening doing her utmost to be attractive. She was fascinating at all times and seasons; but when she used a little effort, could make herself doubly so. She had forgiven Charles Vance a dozen times since that last angry morning. He would be sure to come early, she complacently told herself, and be duly penitent. After all, Charles Vance was a brave, noble fellow. She thought she would not flirt one bit that night with anybody else. The guests all arrived. All but Mr. Vance. Rose wondered. Had he been really vexed, and was he staying away to punish her? Well, let him stay. *She* should not mope or wear the willow. Lovelorn girls were always absurd.

So Rose Ardley was the gayest of the gay. They had a quadrille; some of the elder ones sat down to cards. Dr. Caltran, a deeply scientific man and great mesmerist, and three or four others, went into a discussion on that wonderful subject—clairvoyance. The doctor had been relating certain remarkable incidents, when it was proposed that a test should be given then. Who would become a subject?

No one appeared inclined at first, but Miss Caltran finally acquiesced, and took her seat in a chair in a small room they adjourned to. The doctor had succeeded in sending her to sleep, when Rose looked in. Her attention was immediately arrested, and she watched the experiment with much eagerness.

"Would any one like to put any questions?" asked Dr. Caltran.

There ensued a silence. Eleanor Ardly broke it.

"Rose will. Rose is always ready for anything." And Miss Rose acquiesced at once.

"I don't know what to ask, or what I would most like to hear," she said, with a gay laugh.

"Ask about Charley. Ask what keeps him away. You can tease him well, when you know that."

"But—is there really any truth in it, Dr. Caltran?" and Rose's deep eyes were luminous with some feeling akin to curiosity.

"It is true that the medium can in many cases seem to enter a person's mind, and answer in a remarkable fashion," was the reply. "Many failures are recorded, and mistakes made, but I think they are due to our imperfect knowledge of the science. Suppose you try, Miss Rose; no one can suspect you of collusion."

Quite a circle began to gather round. Miss Caltran appeared to be in a tranquil slumber; her lips were just parted, suggesting her white, even teeth, which were very handsome.

"Well," said Rose, daringly.

"Place your hand in hers," directed the doctor. "Now think intently of the subject in which you wish her to feel interested, and then ask your question."

A thousand thoughts filled Rose Ardley's brain in an instant, but that of Charles Vance was the most prominent. What should she say? for delicacy seemed to hold her back on this subject.

"Make haste," cried Eleanor. "What is Charley Vance doing? Has he gone to sleep and forgotten to come here? Or has he gone visiting elsewhere?"

Rose colored. "I think I will not ask——" but a chorus of eager voices interrupted her.

"Play fair now, Rose. No backing out."

"Are you afraid?"

It was her cousin Kate who asked this, and the sarcastic tone would have roused Rose to any effort. In a strange flutter of nerve and brain she began.

"Don't get excited," said Dr. Caltran, smiling cheeringly.

Rose's mood was too uncertain at first to sway Miss Caltran, (at least, so the doctor said;) she moved uneasily, and vainly essayed to speak. He approached to tranquilize her. It was some time before any coherent answers could be obtained, and then Rose was wrought up to a strange pitch. Some sudden presentiment concerning her lover filled her mind with apprehension. As if translating the young girl's emotion, Miss Caltran began slowly—

"Your friend is in great danger—great danger. He is flying as if for his life, first this way and then that way," making a tortuous motion with her hand. "He is on the river—the ice—and something follows him fast. Hark, do you hear a sharp cry?"

Rose turned deathly white in spite of her strongest efforts.

"Is he coming here?" she asked, scarcely knowing what she said.

"Oh, heavens! they are gaining on him fast. He goes like the wind, but they are too fleet."

As Miss Caltran said this—and it must be remarked that her words throughout were labored and slow—she sighed deeply and evinced great agitation. Her breath was *long* and painful.

"Now they are up with him—now! Oh, save him! save him! Hark to their cries!"

"Oh, by Heaven, what fools we are!" suddenly exclaimed George Ardley, a light breaking on him. "I see it all. Vance has skated up on the river and been followed by a pack of wolves! One was killed a day or two ago, and several have been seen prowling round. Run for your lives, friends. Get something and come to his assistance."

Rose stood spell-bound. For a moment the room swam round; stars appeared to fill every space.

George thrust on his cap and coat, and slung his rifle over his shoulder. Two or three followed suit, and the rooms were in a whirl of confusion.

"Let me go too," Rose almost shrieked.

"My child, there may be some mistake," said Dr. Caltran, soothingly, alarmed at the consequences of his sister's vision. "Do pray be calm."

"No, there is no mistake," she answered, hysterically. "I told him to skate up—his horse was lame—I dared him to come. Oh, merciful heavens, forgive me!"

She was in a perfect agony of despair. The horrible vision her cousin George's words conjured up made a more vivid one in her brain. Her face, that had been so brilliant a short time before, was now the picture of anguish. She could not help thinking that if any evil had befallen him it was clearly her fault. How many times she had tormented him almost beyond endurance; been cool, capricious, laughed at his tenderness and his love. Arraigning her heart for judgment, she found it had been bitterly cruel to him, to the one man for whom she would give her life, if occasion required. In the confusion and crowd she passed quietly up stairs, got her shawl and hood, and stole out unseen. Along she sped like a shadowy wraith, and was on the river as soon as the men with their rifles.

Hark! what was that? A sickening, despairing cry—a wail of mortal agony. Rose recognized it for *his* voice—for they were close upon him now.

Yes, the cry came from Charles Vance. With that one despairing burst he gave up hope and turned upon his horrible pursuers. In the moonlight his eyes glared back to those fierce balls, and there was a deathly pause. The suddenness amazed the unreasoning brutes, but the foremost crouched to spring.

A ball went whizzing by, so closely that Mr. Vance felt the hot air upon his cheek. Then a yell ensued, ending in a howl of maddening pain. Another report, another; footsteps, voices; yet he did not stir.

"Oh, Charles! Charles!" and the next instant Rose lay senseless at his feet.

At first he could not think, could not speak; the utter surprise and sense of deliverance overwhelmed him. He knelt down on the ice, trembling in every limb, and the rest came thronging around. The discomfited enemy were retiring with savage cries, leaving two of their number dead behind them.

"What is it all?" began Mr. Vance. "I—I cannot imagine——"

"Do not try," interrupted George Ardley. "It is the strangest thing that ever happened. Can you walk home? I'll see to Rose." And he picked her up as though she had been a baby.

They went home slowly; Mr. Vance's strength was all but exhausted. Angry mutterings followed them from afar; but there was no real danger now. Rose, reviving to consciousness, struggled away from her cousin's protection.

"Let me walk—I am quite well now," she said, with a touch of her old imperiousness. And she got to Mr. Vance's side.

"Oh, Charles! I have been so selfish and cruel! Will you ever forgive me?"

Charles' answer was to take her arm within his and press it to his side. She broke down with a sob.

"Hush, my darling! God has interposed to save me. But still I do not understand how or why you should all have come."

"Oh, Charles, it is the strangest tale. You will hardly believe it—you, who have laughed at——"

"Don't spoil the story, Rose," said George Ardley from behind. "We'll have it all out when we get home."

Was Dr. Caltran surprised when he heard of the strange escape and saw the rescued man? He made no sign. Miss Caltran, the clairvoyante, was herself then, save for an intense, dull headache.

"They had gained on me so fast, that it seems as if I could not have held out a minute longer," said Mr. Vance to the doctor. "Beside the short distance on the river, there was the dark walk up to the house, and my courage was utterly giving way."

Rose burst into tears. "Charles, as long as I live I will never be capricious again," she whispered; "no, not even when I am your wife; I will try to be a blessing to you instead of a trouble."

And he kissed the sweet lips for their fond confession.

So it all ended well. But the wonderful escape of Charles Vance from the peril of the wolves is talked of in Canada to this day.

Consumption and Climate.

The census of 1870 shows the average mortality from consumption throughout the Union to be in a rough way, proportional to the average temperature of the given State. Deaths from this cause are ten times as frequent in Massachusetts, and—as Mr. Bill has rather candidly neglected to inform us, says an exchange—twice as frequent in Minnesota, as they are in Georgia. Minnesota is indeed a colder State than Massachusetts. But its greater cold is offset in part by the greater dryness of its soil. A damp soil is one of the most prolific causes of consumption. Minnesota occupies an elevated portion of the continent; it is an undulating country, and its natural watersheds insure its through drainage. This circumstance undoubtedly conduces to the healthiness of the climate. Nor is it improbable that its long and severe winters, owing to the constancy of their cold, may be less trying to the consumptive than the varying weather of the Eastern and Middle States. But the Smithsonian Institution records show that the capital city of Minnesota has a winter of 148 days, during which the temperature is 16 deg. Fahr. below the freezing point. That such an arctic temperature is more favorable to the cure of phthisis than a climate comparatively warm and uniform throughout the year, is a point that is not proved. Of the consumptives who go to Minnesota, even in the early stages of their complaint, but one in fifteen are cured. The young men's Christian association of St. Paul has found it necessary to take in charge the burial of the unfriendly invalids that flock there in the vain hope of the climate cure; and they have abundant duty as undertakers. In short, there seems to be no sovereign balm for consumption in Minnesota. Its climate is favorable only to the stronger invalids. To those who are able to endure the tonic effect of cold, we can recommend Minnesota with a qualified hope.

Among the school children of a certain town was a poor little fellow. He could not tell the number of the house in which he lived, and was charged when he next came to school to bring it. The next time he appeared he was asked if he brought the number; "No sir," said he; "it was nailed on the door so tight that I couldn't get it off."

A California Candidate.

Among the candidates for office at the late California election, was one who was very anxious. On the day before election several acquaintances suggested that he must procure pasters. "You can never win, old fellow, unless you get pasters," said they. You need a great number, too, for everybody will 'scratch' in your favor."

The suggestion was pleasant; the candidate counted his cash capital which lay in his right hand pantaloons pocket. Afterward, he walked to a printing-house, and ordered the printing of thirty thousand pasters bearing his name.

"You will have them gummed and cut, of course," said the printer man.

"No, I think not. I'll do that myself," replied the candidate. Dubiously did the printer man look at him, but as the cash was paid in advance, he said nothing.

The printing was not done until after nine o'clock at night, and the candidate, who had been walking up and down the hallway marched triumphantly toward home with his thirty thousand pasters. "About one-half of them will be wasted," thought he; "the balance added to the straight tickets will render my election sure."

They sat up all night "fixing" the pasters—the candidate and his wife, and his wife's mother, and his eldest daughter. The candidate spread mucilage over the backs of the printed sheets of paper; the daughter hung them on a line against the stove to dry, and the wife and her mother cut until their hands were stiff and swollen. Two o'clock, three o'clock, five o'clock came, and still they worked away, yawning at every clip of the shears. The carpet was strewn with scraps of paper, the table streaked with mucilage, and the candidate himself was a perambulating court plaster, so gummy was he.

"My dear," said his wife, at half-past five, "haven't you enough? My thumb is almost cut in two with the shears, and grandma is quite done up."

"We had better keep on, my love." replied the candidate; "I shall need them all."

"Dear me!" said she; "I didn't know that there were thirty thousand voters in the city."

"Of course you didn't; women are not expected to know anything about politics."

The candidate had no sleep that night, and at an early hour in the morning sallied forth to distribute his thirty thousand pasters. Then he "worked" all day, spent a great deal of money for whisky and a great deal of breath for nothing. Then he sat up another twenty-four hours to see the ballots counted. In his precinct, the same in which he had worked so hard, 800 votes had been polled, and of these he had received two! one being by means of a paster. His luck elsewhere had been no better, and he went home. His wife greeted him with smiles; she was sure that her hubby-bubby had been elected. And in response to her congratulatory caresses the brute turned savagely upon his wife and said: "My love, yesterday morning I circulated thirty thousand pasters bearing my name. In the whole city I have received just thirty votes. If you ever say 'paster' to me, I'll sue for a divorce. I am going to bed.

A Weapon of Death.

The torpedoes which have recently been devised for use in the Bosphorus posses some new and peculiar features. They are of two kinds—offensive and defensive. The latter consists of a strong wrought-iron tank capable of containing about four hundred pounds of powder and lying at the bottom of the water; from a fuse in the interior proceeds an electric cable containing a double wire and communication with a voliaic battery on shore. The tank is also provided with an index which floats within five or six feet of the surface of the water, and which, on being touched by the bottom of a ship, immediately conveys a signal to the shore, whence an electric spark would be sent through the powder in the tank, the explosion either sinking or disabling the ship above it. The offensive torpedo, for attacking under cover of a dark night enemies ships lying at anchor, consists of a hollow iron pear-shaped vessel containing a heavy charge of powder and provided with several percussion fuses. This kind of torpedo, is fixed to the end of a boom some thirty feet long, which is attached to the head of a small steam launch. To the boom, which hinges on the head of the vessel, is attached a chain which runs in board over a pulley, and which can be shortened or lengthened at pleasure, raising or lowering the torpedo in the water. The upper portion of the torpedo-case is provided with five percussion fuses, one of which is certain to strike a ship's bottom when propelled against it.

Circassian Women.—The Circassian women, concerning whom we have read such marvels, in prose and verse, are declared by Mrs. Harvey, a recent traveler in Circassia, to be not generally good-looking (though very great beauties are sometimes seen among them), and those of the Abasian province are decidedly plain. "The national dress," says the writer, "does not highten their charms. They usually wear loose Turkish trousers, made of white cotton, and a peculiarly frightful upper garment of some dark cloth, made precisely like that worn by High Church clergymen—tight and straight, and buttoned from the throat to the feet. A striped shawl is sometimes twisted round them like an apron. A blue gauze vail is thrown over the head, and their hair, which is generally long and thick, is worn in two heavy plaits that hang down behind. The beauties who obtain such great reputation in Constantinople and the West, almost invariably come from Georgia and the valleys near El Beronz. In those districts the women have magnificent eyes and fair complexions."

Miss Julia W. Doolittle, of Brooklyn, visited a dental office to have eight or ten teeth extracted, prepartory to using a false set, and while undergoing the operation died from the effects of chloroform.

The Knights Templar of St. Joseph, Mo., drill and hold their reviews on horseback.

An Island on Fire.

The sources of volcanic eruptions in Hawaii are two. First, the crater of Ki-lau-e-a, situated upon the eastern slope of this mountain, and about midway between its summit and the sea. It is a vast pit, nine miles in circumference, sunk in the flank of the mountain, and varying in depth, in different years, from a thousand to fifteen hundred feet, according as the sea of molten lava beneath its floor is at high tide or at ebb. For years this floor will be slowly raised by the accumulating lavas below; and when their lateral pressure becomes at last too great to be resisted, the molten torrent, rending its way with irresistible force through rock and earth, and shaking the whole island with the throes of its progress, finally breaks to the surface, five, ten, or twenty miles from the crater. The river of fire leaps from the ground, a mighty fountain that sometimes plays a thousand feet high, with a jet that is several hundred feet in diameter, and pours down the flank of the mountain toward the sea. This it often reaches, enlarging the area of the island by pushing out new capes and promontories of lava into the water. The lava thus ejected may remain, in many places, warm and smoking for months after the eruption has ceased; yet I have seen spots where the natives, pulverizing the cooled lava, and mixing with it a few dead leaves before planting in it, had obtained good crops of sweet potatoes from what a year before was a torrent of liquid fire. Nature thus renews the soil—furnishing a bran-new article at each eruption, white-hot from her chemical labratories in the center of the earth.

With each eruption "the bottom is knocked out," so to speak, of the great crater of Ki-lau-e-a. The flood of molten lava upon which it rests is rapidly drained away, and the vast floor of indurated lavas, an area of six square miles at the bottom of the pit, goes crashing still further downward, three, four, five hundred feet toward the central fires; as when the water—to compare great things with small—is let off from a frozen mill-pond, and the ice settles down upon the bottom. The mountain-wall is probably not entirely solid and compact, as the lavas are extremely fluid, and in running off honeycomb its structure, leaving numerous caverns behind them, through which subsequent eruptions force their way. Yet the pressure required for the lava to rend the mountain-wall is estimated at not less than five hundred pounds to the square inch, or a million pounds for a stream two feet deep and seven feet broad. When the breadth of the lava stream is measured by miles instead of feet, force enough is exerted to shake the island to its very foundations.

The grand eruptions of the Ki-lau-e-a occur, with some approach of regularity, at intervals of about eight years. But the volcano does not, like Vesuvius, Etna, or Stromboli, confine its activity to special occasions. The fire rages continually in the southern end of the great crater, where a lake of melted lava tosses its red surges and pours forth its sulphurous vapors without ceasing. This lake, the "Hale Mau-mau," or "House of Everlasting Fire" of the old heathen mythology, may be safely approached by the traveler at almost any time.

The appearance of this lake varies greatly, however, at different times. Sometimes the lava is so far sunken below its banks that the travel cannot reach it, and comes away quite disappointed with what he has seen. Again, in times of great activity, the fiery sea may overflow upon the bottom of the crater, or force itself up through numerous cracks and chasms in the floor of indurated lavas. I was once in the bottom of Ki-lau-e-a when the lava, boiling up from below, overflowed its banks in a manner so uniform and measured so as congeal around the edges of the great lake, and build for itself a barrier around the fearful cauldron of fire. The lava, thus walled in, gradually rose many feet above the level where I with others stood, at first quite unconscious of the terrific process that was going on so near us. The fiery waves, lapping over the margin, congealed where they fell, and thus builded up, little by little, their inclosing wall. The surface of this sea of fire was elevated about thirty feet above the level of the bottom of the crater; it was a boiling mass of fluid lavas, half a mile in diameter, that surged and thundered and sent down a threatening roar.—Splashes of liquid fire, hurled over the margin of its confining barrier, fell among our company. Warned by this danger, we withdrew to a short distance, and awaited the breaking forth of the imprisoned fire. We had hardly gained our new point of observation before the lava wall gave way in two places with a thundering crash and roar, and from each of the rents thus made a torrent of liquid fire poured over a cliff fifty feet high, into the rough channel of a former flow. Roaring, glowing, smoking, and wreathed in bluish flames, it ground along the lava channel with a peculiar dull thunder, that was caused by the ponderous weight of the molten mass. It lapped up huge rocks and bore them away upon its surface; I could see them oscillate sluggishly upon the red river, and finally melt and sink into it like so much wax. The power and splendor of this sudden display, the fierce sweep of the mighty torrent, the strange process that had heaped up the flood of lava to disgorge it with such resistless power, all made a spectacle never to be forgotten by any of the party who witnessed it.—*Dr. T. M. Coan, in Scribner's for October.*

How to Acquire a Good Memory.—As a general thing, we read too much, and think about what we read too little; the consequence is, that most of the people we meet know something in a superficial way about almost everything, and very little in a thorough way about anything. Not a tenth part of what is read is remembered for a month after the book, magazine or newspaper is laid aside. Daniel Webster, who had a rich store of imformation on almost every subject of general interest, on being asked how it was that he could remember so accurately, replied, that it had been his habit for years to reflect for a short time on what he read, and so fix all the facts and ideas worth remembering in his mind. Any one who does this will be surprised to find how retentive his memory will become, and how long after reading a book, or interesting article, the best portions thereof will remain.

A prudent man is like a pin—his head prevents him from going too far.

Punishment of the Wheel.

The punishment of the wheel, which was suppressed in 1790, was one of the most frightful that can be imagined. The criminal was extended on a St. Andrew's cross. There were on it eight niches cut, one below each arm between the elbow and wrist; another between each elbow and the shoulder; one under each thigh, and one under each leg. The executioner, armed with a heavy triangular bar of iron, gave a violent blow on each of these eight places, and of course broke the bone; and a ninth on the pit of the stomach. The mangled victim was now lifted from the cross and stretched on a small wheel, placed vertically at one of the ends of the cross, his back on the upper part of the wheel, his head and feet hanging down. The sentence provided that he was to remain there as long as it pleased God to prolong his life. Many lingered there five or six hours, some longer. A son of a jeweller in the Place de la Dauphine, who had murdered his father, was only relieved by death at the end of twenty-four hours. These unhappy wretches, often uttering horrible blasphemies, always tormented by a continual thirst, incessantly called for something to drink. A priest never left their sides during the excruciating agony, but incessantly put water to their parched lips, wiped the sweat from their burning brows, and pointed to a merciful God above the scaffold, extending his arms to receive him. This holy duty was always discharged by a doctor of the Sorbonne.

That's What's the Matter.

When Conde was about to pass through Berne he was met at the gate by the civil authorities. After a glowing outburst of compliment, the Mayor added: "To show our joy, we wished to greet you with the reports of a numerous artillery. We have not been able to fire the cannon, however, for eighteen reasons. In the first place, we have none; in the second"——"My good friend," interrupted the Prince, "your first reason is so excellent, we will excuse the other seventeen." A ludicrous counterpart to this story occurred the other day in Peru. A Russian war-steamer arriving at Callao saluted the Peruvian fleet, which was anchored in the bay. To the chagrin of the Russian commander, the compliment was received in silence. After waiting for some time to see if the omission would be repaired, he demanded an explanation. This promptly came in the statement that "the Peruvian Navy had been disarmed by order of the President." In a word, there was not a gun left aboard the fleet. The object of the President in thus stripping the ships of their armament was not set forth. Manifestly, however, although such a consummation might be agreeable to the Peace Society, or to an invading enemy, its present consequences must have been rather mortifying to the Peruvians themselves.

Water in the Desert.—Under the sand of the great desert there is a liquid bed which the inhabitants of the borders of the Sahara have long been in the habit of reaching by means of wells. With rude instruments they penetrate the successive layers of sand, gravel, and clay, till they come to a schistose or slaty stratum at a depth of one or two hundred fathoms. This last covers the precious fluid, and in penetrating it the indefatigable workmen are often overwhelmed by the sudden ascent of the water in great quantity. Sometimes these wells are completed under a column of a hundred or more feet of water of infiltration which it is impossible to keep out. The Arabs dive to the bottom, remaining not more than four or five minutes, and bring to the surface, as the result of each trial, only a few pounds of sand. It is evident that often many years are needed for the completion of these wells, under such circumstances. The French have come to the relief of these unfortunate inhabitants, and have sunk Artesian wells in various parts of the desert, some of which furnish more water than the famous well of Grenelle.

How to See Under Water.—A correspondent of the *Scientific American* writes: I once had occasion to examine the bottom of a mill pond, for which I constructed a float out of inch plank, sufficient to buoy me up; through the centre of this float I cut a hole, and placed a blanket over it, when I was enabled to clearly discover objects on the bottom, and several lost tools were discovered and picked up. I am satisfied that, where water is sufficiently clear, this latter plan could be successfully used for searching for lost bodies and articles. I would now suggest that this experiment be tried on the sea; for I am satisfied that, with a craft like the Great Eastern, where an observatory could be placed at the bottom, with sufficient darkness, by the aid of glasses we could gaze down into the depths of the sea, the same as we can survey the starry heavens at mid-night.

Railroads.—Several important questions connected with railroads were considered at the Commercial Convention at Baltimore. Attention was called to the necessity of restricting the increasing power of great railway companies, and reforms in railway management were suggested. With respect to the narrow-gauge question the sub-committee on railroads report that although there is not yet sufficient data on which to base conclusive opinions, enough is known to offer many inducements for the construction of a narrow-gauge roads in certain parts of the country, their cheapness and the facility with which they can be adapted to heavy grades and sharp curves being established.

California Wool.— The last monthly report of the Agricultural Department gives an account of a remarkable wool clip in California. It is gravely stated, and no joke is intended, that the Department has a sample of wool from a fleece that weighed seventy-eight and a half pounds, and that the first fleece taken from the same sheep when sixteen months old, weighed forty-two and three-fourths pounds. There is a good deal of anxiety at the Agricultural Department to know more about the sheep of California, and the new Chief Clerk of the Department, who is said to be responsible for the first statement, will doubtless have some further report on the subject next month.

Facts and Fancies.

It is no uncommon thing for hot words to produce a coolness.

A straw ride is said to be a sure cure for the worst kind of dyspepsia.

How to make a hot-bed—Go to sleep with a lighted cigar in your mouth.

California Methodist Churches number 98, with 108 preachers and 5,815 members.

Many young men are so improvident they cannot keep any thing but late hours.

Wisconsin girls hire out to gather apples, and climb the trees as well as a man, and much more gracefully.

A toper sneered at a young man for wearing spectacles, when the latter said, "It is better to use glasses over the nose as I do, than under the nose as you do!"

An enterprising market-woman has been doing a thriving business in Paterson in selling roll-butter, the interior of which, to within half an inch of the surface, is filled with axle-grease.

For wedding invitations this season many seem to prefer a large note sheet with the invitation inscribed on it in script, and only two cards, one with the name of the groom and the other that of the bride.

The average income of each of the 1,500 bar-rooms in St. Louis is $10 per day, which implies that at least 12,500 residents of that prosperous town can afford to take a drink every hour between sunrise and sunset.

"Strip me of the robe of pride, clothe me with humility," were the words sung by a Louisville choir as a lady, whose dress was white satin and point lace, with a long train carried by a page, passed up the aisle.

Younger Brother—"What's the matter Mary. Are you unhappy because neither of those fellows you were flirting with at croquet, yesterday, proposed to you?" Mary—"Both did, Tom. And—I said yes to the wrong one!"

An old gentleman of 70 wanted to be married to a young girl of 17. One day a friend surprised him tenderly embracing his intended. "I don't wonder at your astonishment," said the young lady, "you don't often find young heads on old shoulders."

A Chinese Theatre.

The San Francisco correspondent of the Chicago *Times* describes a visit to the Chinese theatre:

The pit was full, the second tier crammed, and every seat in the house occupied. Opposite us sat a dozen more Chinese women, who were cut off from the rest of the audience by a board partition. The orchestra consisted of one fellow who was smoking a long pipe, and who was sawing furiously at a sort of fiddle with one string, of another industrious youth who hammered away with an immense pair of cymbals, and a third who let himself out by whanging savagely at a suspended gong. There did not seem to be so much music about it as there was noise. It may have been an accompaniment, but I could not perceive it. It drowned the words of the actors, and set my tympana to shuddering with a mortal terror.

A Chinese play is peculiar. It runs for two or three hundred years, and a little of it is given each night. When one actor dies, his place is taken by another, and the play goes on. Few Chinamen have ever seen the beginning and end of the same play. The one I saw had been going on for one hundred and sixty-four years and some months in China, and for eleven years and eight months, has been in progress in this city, and they haven't got through only a part of the second act.

The part we saw was peculiar, if nothing else. Ah Young kept up a running interpretation, of which, owing to the war of the orchestra, I did not hear a single word. The supes stood around among the orchestra with their hats on, and took off or put on the furniture as was necessary. The actors all came in at a door to the right of the "music," and went out through a door at the left. There was no dropping of curtains, no shifting of scenes. A couple or three actors would come in, jabber a moment, and then pass out.

Contentment.—Content is the gift of Heaven and not the certain effect of anything upon the earth and it is as easy for Providence to convey it without wealth as with it; it being the undeniable prerogative of the first cause, that whatsoever it does by the mediation of second causes, it can do immediately by itself without them. The heavens can and do every day derive water and refreshment from the earth without either pipes or conduits: though the weakness of human industry is forced to fly to these little assistances to compass the same effects. Happiness and comfort stream immediately from God Himself, as light issues from the sun, and sometimes looks and darts itself into the meanest corners, while it forbears to visit the largest and noblest rooms. Every man is happy or miserable, as the temper of his mind places him either directly under or beside the influences of the Divine nature, which enlighten and enliven the disposed mind with secret ineffable joys, and so as the vicious or unprepared mind is wholly unacquainted with.

Newspaper Decisions.—1. Any person who takes a paper regularly from the post-office—whether directed to his name or another's or whether he has subscribed or not—is responsible for the payment. 2. If a person orders his paper discontinued, he must pay all arrearages, or the publisher may continue to send it until payment is made, and collect the whole amount, whether the paper is taken from the office or not. 3. The courts have decided that refusing to take newspapers and periodicals from the post-office, or removing and leaving them uncalled for, is *prima facie* evidence of intentional fraud.

London Ice Trade.—The ice trade of London is in the hands of some half-dozen merchants, and the article is kept in what are termed wells or shades. One of these when filled contains 3,000 tons of rough ice. As shot in by the ice-getters it is broken up and well packed together and levelled with shovels, forming in time a compact mass, so solid that it has to be hewn with axes when required for the market. The shrinking of this dense block from the wall on all sides is only six inches.

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